

Will— and Won't

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WHAT children will — and won't—do makes up an impressive proportion of the things which trouble presentday parents. But the trouble is not so much with the children, or with the parents, or even with their principles, as it is with the unwarranted expectation of living happily ever after. We still need to learn that because we believe one way of doing a thing is in the long run better than another is no reason for assuming that it will usher in a millenium.

The whole trend of modern education has impressed us, perhaps over much, with the uniqueness of every child, and there has been no aspect of child training in which this emphasis has been stronger than in relation to these crucial moments when the child defies our requests or flatly refuses to respond to our most carefully turned directions. We even hesitate to discuss this problem of willfulness or negativism at all, except in regard to its particular manifestations in a particular child. And yet the problem is, in a way, a universal one, for each solution is an epitome of what a given parent in his inmost heart believes.

On the one hand, are those of us who still may more or less force the child to submit without question to definite demands from us, on the theory that it is in this way that we can best toughen him for meeting a world in which individual desires receive, after all, very little consideration. If this is our belief, we shall busy ourselves with particular schemes and methods—rewards, punishments and the like—whatever may be necessary for making the child accede to definite demands at the time when they are made. The old authoritative dogma of do-as-you're-told, had as one of its objectives that of toughening the child's fiber, fitting him to meet the world and to face reality. Yet with some it never worked; not only did they never achieve toughness but they were deprived

of the compensation of knowing that they were understood by those in whose hands their destinies lay.

A father, himself so much a product of the do-as-you're-told school that he has no realization of its warping effect upon him, has the greatest scorn for his son whom he has in turn attempted to coerce and dominate. To be told that the young man needs time to "find himself" affects him like the proverbial red rag to a bull. By implication he points to himself as an example of what could be achieved under the old authoritarian regime. What he does not see is that in his later career, as an employer and as a parent, he has taken out on those beneath him all the stubbornness and negativism which had been aroused in him. In his youth his personality received no consideration, and in his maturity he has shown no mercy to the integrity of other personalities.

Another point to which he is completely blind is that there is no proof whatever that the modern soft young man, whose "spoiling" he so deplores, would have come any nearer to finding himself under the authoritarian discipline. The boy's temperament is such that he would probably have gone to pieces completely if any persistent effort had been made to "break" his will. His present conflicts with himself and the world are serious enough even under existing circumstances. He has neither the desire nor the make-up for his father's kind of adjustment—if adjustment it can be called; nor would he care to pay its price in loss of human values.

Finally, the father's argument that consideration for the individuality of his child has resulted in failure is meaningless, because this boy never had real consideration. Even though other environmental influences, such as those of school and church, have tended to help him develop his capacities and to express his personality, the effect of his father's attitude has blighted utterly his chances for normal

development. The toughening process, consistently applied, would have been fatal, mentally, physically, or perhaps both.

This may be an extreme case, for obviously the father's behavior has more deep rooted causes than a mere belief in authoritarian child training. We must accept this fact, that there are always personality difficulties involved in such a need as his to command and dominate; and we must lay upon it, rather than upon any "system," the responsibility for such bitter failure. At the same time we repeat that this authoritarian attitude lends sanction and prestige to the "stern parent" which seem to be little justified as we learn more about the innermost well-springs of human behavior.

Seen in Perspective

OUR day-to-day reactions will be modified, both consciously and unconsciously, as we grow in knowledge and in understanding of the individual's need to be himself. If we put our faith in the slow process of that education which is based on constant consideration of each child's very own individuality and development, we shall need to give careful and constant attention to the vast complex of inherited, prenatal and environmental influences which form individual personality. Those of us who have discarded the uncompromising principles of our forefathers have, in so doing, put behind us their successes as well as their failures. The presentday parent who hoped to spare his children the smarting discipline of his own childhood by respecting the uniqueness of every child is surprised and pained to find the "sledding" still full of difficulties and discouragement.

Have we been overconfident? Have we gone on the assumption that we would find perfection by following this newer procedure? Have we let hope father a belief that we and our children can so easily be spared suffering and pain?

What Parents Want to Know

IN a study of the questions on negativism—will and won't—as raised by mothers attending study groups, one repeatedly finds this uncertainty of parents unable to follow the do-as-you're-told school, but handicapped and confused in putting into practice consideration for the development of a particular child's individuality.

Some of these questions are fairly objective and grow out of the normal, healthy reactions of a child to his environment. A problem is raised only by

the parent's desire, not simply to avoid old pitfalls, but still more to make the most of present opportunities. Of such are the following:

My child marks the walls and furniture.

My child tears books and pulls off the wallpaper.

How can I avoid saying "No" and "Don't" to my child when there are certain things he absolutely must not do?

My two-year-old won't stop opening the icebox.

Both my children often want the same toy.

My child cannot leave candy alone.

When they disturb me with their play, should I or the children leave the room?

My child of six uses bad language which he hears from others.

But there is another kind of question which reflects an already more or less clearly marked emotional conflict in parent-child relationships:

If I reason with my child instead of exacting obedience, he argues and talks back.

My child doesn't seem to care whether he is punished or not.

My child demands constant attention.

My child always makes a fuss at meal times.

My three-year-old bangs his head on the floor.

My six-year-old whines at every little thing.

My boy of ten constantly teases and annoys his seven-year-old brother.

First Steps in Self-Criticism

THOSE in the first group can be met by remembering that they are really normal, no matter how trying to the adult, and by suggesting ways in which the parents may further the healthy activities and development of the child. And even some of the more deeply involved may be much improved. This method has been tried out with considerable success in two pamphlets published by the Child Study Association.*

The parent who is either too lazy or too involved emotionally to follow this probing process will naturally find such aids to self-examination of little use. But the parent who is truly imbued with a desire to meet the child on the basis of his needs for healthy development, mental and emotional, and who is not too driven by his own personality difficulties and compulsions, will find much help in resolving his perplexities through the self-analysis suggested by careful study.

Fortunately, too, most children, like most parents, are able to steer a course between the needs of their own personalities and the demands made upon them

* Parents' Questions—Child Study Association of America.

by the external world. And where both are flexible and their relationship is not already taut and strained, the adjusting of the parents' demands to the child's desires becomes a plastic thing which grows and changes with the child while constantly developing in him a reasonably willing compliance to reasonable adult demands.

In the daily living with our children the adjustments based on a far view of child development may seem to be more difficult than those that take their authority from do-as-you're-told. But the objective view, not only of our own child, but also of other human beings with whom we have contacts, the view which accepts them as they are and leaves us free to bend all our energies toward helping them be their best—this is a challenge both provocative and stimulating. It will not free us from doubts and anxieties when we watch these children of ours coming to grips with world forces; for struggles cannot be eliminated even through this dynamic growth in a

changing world. But since we cannot think and live for them, we owe it to our children to equip them to live their own lives. As far as we know today, the best preparation for living is not to coerce, to command—but so to live *with* our children from infancy onward that they may come through, physically fit, with mentality developed to its fullest capacity and emotions stable. Such a program can be best achieved, we believe, by a recognition and consideration of the uniqueness of every child through a study of why he will and why he won't.

Our real difficulty lies in assuming that there is a way of child rearing free from trouble and pain and that somehow, some way, we can find the happy ending around the corner. If, then, upon careful study we accept the validity of the principles underlying the rearing of the child as an individual with his particular uniqueness, let us also be willing to accept the labor, the difficulties, the frustrations—and the joys—inescapably involved.

What Does Training Mean?

Learning to be an acceptable member of society makes demands upon the child which the parent must understand if he is to safeguard.

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THE object of all training is to prepare the child to meet society's demands. He is born a pleasure-loving being who refuses to countenance denial. Within the short period of a few months or, at most, years, he must learn that all his demands are not to be met, that there will be an uncomfortable pause between the expression of a wish and its realization, and that he must consider the welfare of others.

Through training he must be altered from one who takes pleasure in destroying objects into one who is considerate. His cruelty must be transformed into sympathy. His aggression must be curbed. He must forego the satisfaction obtained from sexual curiosity, exhibitionism and genital play. He must turn into disgust the pleasure he derives from playing with his excreta. He must learn that in response to a given signal he is to empty his bladder or pass his stool. By degrees he must give up much that he has

found pleasant in all of these reactions and accept what is unpleasant. He will not make these changes without a struggle, and the degree of his resistance will depend on the strength of his inborn instinctual drives. When this transformation has taken place, we say that the child has been trained. When he has failed to accept the prohibitions that have been placed upon him, we call him untrained.

The most successful method of changing a child's behavior relies on his love for, and need of his parents. Unless their demands are met he finds he may lose their affection for him. Even physical punishment usually signifies to him the removal of love. Without his parents' affection the child is lost. He develops anxieties that make him unhappy even when his instinctive wishes have been gratified. He finds that by accepting the demands of those upon whom he is dependent, he secures for himself a more lasting pleasure. In the meantime renunciation stimulates

the search for substitute pleasures. The wise parent can be helpful in finding them for him. Playing with clay and sand and sailing boats on water, for instance, will help to displace an interest in urine and stools, or sexual curiosity may be sublimated into a wish to learn about many things. Freud has described this process as a change from the pleasure principle to the reality principle.

The strength of the instinctive drives varies from child to child. These differences are constitutional, and unfortunately often the child with a strongly developed instinctive make-up must be trained by parents who are similarly endowed. In many cases these parents as children have themselves been trained with difficulty, and their present attempts in turn to train their own child reawaken the conflicts that were set up in their own early lives. Those who are responsible for the training of children frequently do not take these constitutional differences into consideration and are discouraged if their children do not respond to usual measures.

The steps that go to make up training for sphincter control are worth following both for their intrinsic and far-reaching importance and also because they illustrate the complex nature of the training problem. When we demand that all children should stop soiling themselves at approximately fifteen months, we overlook certain important facts. For one thing individuals differ in the physical development of the sphincter muscles, in the efficiency of the delicate nerve mechanisms that control the opening and closing of the excretory passages, and in the degree of receptivity of these impulses in the central nervous system. There is also a marked variation in the amount of pleasure which different infants obtain in retaining or passing the stool. There is a difference in the needs of different children to cling to the right to decide for themselves as to time and place. Finally, there is a vast difference in the relationship between the parent and the child, depending upon how much parental love is available for the child. This depends on unconscious factors beyond parental control.

Weighing Gain and Loss

THE unwanted, rejected child who is denied love has little to gain by complying with the parents' wishes. The overindulged child has little to lose by refusing to accept prohibitions since he is sure that love will not be denied him. It has been repeatedly observed that if something interferes with the expression of parental love shortly after the training process has been established, the child is likely to return to the more primitive pattern of behavior.

Psychoanalytic observation has disclosed the importance of the role played by the strong instinctive drives in character formation. The energy that will later be located in the genitals has first been present in the mucous membrane lining of the mouth, and then of the anus. The presence of this energy helps to explain the resistiveness of many infants when attempts are made to prohibit thumbsucking or control defecation. The greater the strength of the instincts, the more there is likely to be a fixation of the child's interest on oral and anal pleasures. This fixation is enhanced by pleasant conditioning such as may occur with the repeated taking of rectal temperatures by the mother. As a result of such fixations there is a tendency during periods of stress and denial for the child to regress back to these early pleasurable stages of development. We have here an explanation for the return to infantile behavior that accompanies the death of a parent, the removal to a foster home, or the arrival of a new infant into the home.

Toward Clearer Insight

PSYCHOANALYSIS of the child has increased our knowledge of his emotional needs. The child analyst is primarily concerned with the causes of the child's refusal or inability to conform to these primary demands which society makes upon him. A deep seated need has been left unfulfilled and this need must be located. Suggestions gleaned from the psychoanalysis of adults have already led to changes in our methods of training which will no doubt be further modified by the findings of the child analyst.

Many helpful suggestions are already familiar. These stress the importance of objectivity on the parents' part, a need which cannot be overemphasized. Most children will respond to the kind of training which thoughtful, self-controlled parents establish, but there will always be some who do not, and this failure is usually caused in great measure by the fact that the parents have not succeeded in their own efforts to be objective.

For a parent to be objective though his child masturbates demands that his own sexual conflicts have been solved so that the relative harmlessness of the act can be accepted. To be dispassionate in the face of repeated stealing and lying by a four-year-old boy usually implies that there have been no instances of delinquency or crime in the families of both his parents. To be objective, parents must be well adjusted to life and to each other.

But unfortunately, this is not the case with most parents of children who present really serious problems, and the efforts of those who wish to help the un-

adjusted child often must be directed toward his parents. Particularly, the nagging parent must be made to realize that burdening the child with an excess of supervision represents hostility toward him. It is no easy matter to help a mother see that she has a need to hate as well as love her child. Yet even the fact that this need is unconscious does not prevent the development of a feeling of guilt. Repeated interviews with a trained, understanding person may give her sufficient insight to allow her to dispense with the exaggerated need to control her child. If this cannot be accomplished, and the problems presented by the child continue to be serious, it might even be better to remove the child from the home.

Intensive study of the character of criminals has demonstrated that the roots of delinquency frequently are located in the first few years of life. Hatred of society and need for revenge may be only a projection of the hostility to parents brought about by early disturbed relationships. Extreme as it is, we must look upon crime, then, as no less closely related to early training than is bed wetting or thumbsucking. It is of utmost importance, therefore, that the relationship between the parent and child be one that fosters the acceptance of society by the child.

Fortunately, most parents are not themselves so deeply conflicted that training becomes so baffling a problem. And even those parents, whose own rearing has left its mark upon them in unresolved emotional difficulties, may find themselves through the help of a skilful analyst. Most children, too, have such a

great need for the affection of adults that they eventually accept the standards of a trained child, and it is to their advantage that they do so since the trained child suffers less than the untrained. Through acceptance by society at an early age the child makes his first steps toward the establishment of independence. The need to fall back on his parents is lessened. The separation of the child from the parent is painful to him and more so to the parent, but this is of a temporary nature and is negligible as compared to the unhappiness that results from excessive dependence. For, contrary to what he believes, the parent does not gain greater love through dependence. Nor does the child find in it more security.

With increasing knowledge of the nature of instincts has come a change of attitude toward the problem of training; the emphasis is being placed on the finding of methods that will be less painful to the child rather than less troublesome to the parent. Despite the most careful preventative measures there will always be aggression, hatred of the brother or sister, jealousy of the father or mother, and needs to satisfy sexual wishes. We know that it is important that these feelings be modified, but we are also aware that the modification of these wishes means sacrifice on the part of the child. Further study will yield more insight into what this entails and what compensations have real meaning in the child's developing life. Parents who are comparatively secure in their own adjustments to life can do much to prevent this sacrifice from being too costly.

Thumbsucking

A group of specialists discusses the newer attitudes toward thumbsucking, as based on research and on clinical experience, and suggests when to take it seriously and when not.

"MY baby fifteen months old sucks his thumb. How can I cure him? I have tried mits, bandages and splints without success and am so anxious to break the habit before it becomes fixed and leads to deformity of the jaw or to adenoids."

Every physician, every child guidance agency, every mother, hears this query times without number. So much advice, both verbal and printed, has passed back and forth, representing so many varieties of opinion as to causes and so many shades of severity as to treatment, that the need for clarification has been long overdue. Accordingly in the spring of

1930, the Child Study Association invited physicians, psychologists, nursery school teachers and social workers, as well as parents, to a round-table discussion in order to help in the untangling of some of the misunderstandings and half truths which have accumulated. Representative workers in the field gave accounts of research and observation, and outlined whatever conclusions they had reached as to both causes and treatment of thumbsucking in young children. Papers by Leslie B. Hohman, Assistant Visiting Psychiatrist to the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore; David M. Levy, Clinical Director of the

Institute for Child Guidance, New York City; Louis C. Schroeder, a pediatrician practicing in New York City, and Harriet M. Johnson of the Bureau of Educational Experiment were discussed in detail.

Undue Concern

WHAT emerged—of the highest importance for parents—was the unanimity as to the whole matter of treatment. Again and again was it reiterated that the whole “bad habit” aspect of the matter has received unnecessary, even dangerous, emphasis; that parental efforts should be directed toward substituting other activities for the sucking; and that even complete disregard is to be preferred to forcible restraints, punishments or humiliation. From further experience since the symposium was held, the participants all feel that they would corroborate even more strongly this conclusion.

A prime duty, as Dr. Hohman pointed out in opening the symposium, for those to whom parents look to show them the way, is therefore to take this question of fingersucking out of the limbo of fearful habits and to say frankly that we do not regard it as a matter of great importance.

Speaking as a psychiatrist concerning the alleged relation of thumbsucking to “neurotic” traits in childhood or later life, he continues, “A questionnaire was presented to a group of presumably normal adults—the students of the third year medical class at the Johns Hopkins Medical School of which there are seventy-five members—and also to a similar number of patients in the Phipps Clinic, all of whom have been admitted for some psychopathy or mental disorder. In these two groups, one a normal group and the other a mentally sick group, the percentage of thumbsucking was about the same; that is, one-quarter of each group could remember having been thumbsuckers. . . . If the percentage of thumbsucking in childhood is the same for a group of normal adults as that for a mentally sick group, it cannot be argued on the evidence that thumbsucking signifies anything profound in the development of any marked personality disorder.”

Reversing Some Conclusions

AGREEING with this view, Dr. Schroeder urges that care should be taken not to over-stress the whole subject. “I know that children who have something to suck are infinitely more satisfied with themselves and the world in general than other children who are constantly being thwarted.” He says, “I believe that with constant supervision when the act starts and with the substitution of something in

place of the thumb, the steps toward leaving off will be easy because the infant is more likely to tire of an outside object and give it up.”

As for the old bugaboo of jaw malformation, it is pretty much agreed that there is little scientific evidence to support it. An investigation conducted at the Merrill-Palmer School in Detroit* concludes that if the practice stops before the onset of the second dentition, no malocclusion in the jaw results.

These general conclusions were so unanimous that interest inevitably resolves itself into an inquiry into the causes. What makes an infant suck his thumb? Is it possible or desirable to forestall the habit rather than repress it after it has arisen? How are we to regard thumb- and fingersucking in older children?

No one has contributed more to our knowledge of causes than Dr. Levy, whose investigations stand almost alone in having removed the subject from the realm of mere conjecture.** He summarizes his findings and his conclusions, and outlines the usual steps in this phase of development.

An Essential but Passing Need

THE infant needs not only food, drink, sleep, warmth and those things with which mother and nurse are forever providing him; he needs also a certain activity of the mouth zone as an end in itself, that is, not merely as a means to nutrition. Dr. Levy believes, therefore, that the infant craves the actual sucking phase of the feeding period, needing it for his emotional satisfaction just as much as he needs milk for his physical sustenance. Consequently, infants who, for one reason or another, get insufficient sucking time at breast or bottle, by and large tend to compensate for this deficiency by sucking something else, the thumb being most convenient and nearest.

Far from tending to become a “fixed habit,” the sucking phase of existence is characteristically limited in its grosser manifestations to infancy and, if not unduly thwarted, plays itself out in the natural course of events by about the age of one or two years. At this time the child's interest in exploring his environment is all-important and his thumb tends to be in too constant use to be employed for long in the mouth. The normally developing child voluntarily gives up sucking his thumb at this time in favor of using it in still more satisfying ways, so that in the vast majority of cases the habit will take care of itself. Concerning those children who continue with thumb- or finger-

* Lewis, Samuel J. Undesirable Habits Influencing the Deciduous Dentition. *J. Am. Dent. Assn.*, Sept. 1932, xviii, pp. 17, 66-81.

** Fingersucking and Accessory Movements in Early Infancy; an Etiologic Study. *Am. J. Psych.*, May, 1928, vii, No. 6.

sucking beyond the age of three or four Dr. Levy feels the problem becomes more complicated, and each child needs special study to ascertain the nature of the phantasies or frustrations which force him to fall back upon what is, after all, simply an infantile mode of gaining satisfaction.

How It Begins

AUTHORITIES agree that from 25 to 40 per cent of infants suck their thumbs in varying degrees of intensity and duration. Dr. Levy's figures, as to the relation between the beginning of the practice and changes in the infant's feeding routine which tend to reduce the number of minutes he is permitted to suck at breast or bottle, bear out his contention that thumbsucking arises from the need to compensate for insufficient sucking time:

"One hundred children on a four-hour schedule showed 40 per cent thumbsucking; one hundred on a three-hour schedule showed about 25 per cent thumbsucking. Five hundred children on unscheduled feeding are reported to have shown 6 per cent. These findings indicate that in groups of infants the percentage of thumbsucking is in inverse proportion to the total amount of sucking time in the child's twenty-four hour schedule.

"Many of the cases studied make the point much more forceful than it appears from a statistical survey. For instance, one child's thumbsucking started in the fifth month. Through the aid of a very accurate mother who kept notes, we were able to work out the maximum amount of sucking that went on. She reports as follows: In the first month of life, the baby averaged 170 minutes of sucking time for twenty-four hours; in the third and fourth months, 140 minutes; the fifth month, 120 minutes; the sixth month, 80 minutes. This has seemed to me but one of many instances where thumbsucking has its onset because the sucking phase of the regular feedings fails to satisfy the child's requirements.

"It also seems to me interesting that the habit began four weeks after weaning from the breast, so that it had no direct connection with weaning as such. The decrease in the sucking time allotted the child was due to decreasing the number of nursing periods, and also to the fact that feedings, previously 30 minutes, whether from breast or bottle, now were reduced to 20 minutes, due possibly to the substitution of cereals and vegetables for sucking in the eating process.

"In a similar case, a child was getting along very well at the breast until between the fourth and eighth week, when he began at nursing time to refuse the

breast, lying in the mother's arms and cooing at her. He began to dawdle and not nurse though the mother would insert the nipple into his mouth and see that he got through the allotted 20 minutes. When he dawdled she made it 30 minutes instead of 20, because she felt he did not get enough nursing. The doctor suggested that when the baby would not nurse, he should be put back to bed and go without one entire feeding. The mother carried out the doctor's suggestion and put the child in bed; whereupon he began to suck his thumb for the first time. I utilize these cases because we cannot usually get such an accurate report of data.

"Another observation offers further corroboration. Calves who are not allowed to suck from the udder and are forced to swallow from a bucket, *always* develop (I say this with some stress because the cattlemen I have seen all said it with equal emphasis) the habit of nibbling other calves' ears. The cattlemen thenceforward have to contend with a sucking habit which they deal with by the typical methods of parents, that is, by mechanical prevention.

By-Products of Discipline

"IF I may be permitted a digression, I should like to comment on the response of the child to the withdrawal of the thumb from the mouth in each case to which I have just referred. It is important to remember that thumbsucking is for many children in the second and third months of life, the first occasion for correction and discipline. As the reaction to the first training the child gets, it may give us a clue to future patterns of a more complex nature.

"In the first case, when the child's thumb would be taken out of his mouth he would just put it back. After several months of that kind of instruction, the child would put the thumb back in his mouth and would growl or make some noise in protest. When the child was about fifteen months old, an uncle would say, 'Well! there's that kid with his thumb in his mouth again.' Whereupon the child would put the other thumb in his mouth too. Before long, as soon as the uncle appeared on the scene, both thumbs went in the mouth. They might have gone to the nose; they had that same significance.

"In the other, elbow splints were used. The child looked immediately at the splints, then looked at the thumb and then, pitifully, at the mother. She stood it for three days and then let the child have his thumb. I mention these cases to show that the observation, a thumbsucking child is a stubborn child, may be true of those children who have learned

through the power of the sucking pleasure to defy adult repression.

"To return to the question of the onset of thumbsucking in relation to sucking time during feedings, other observations show in like manner that if infants who have had night feedings, that is, more sucking time, are compared with those who have not, they invariably show a smaller time percentage of thumbsucking. Still another bit of evidence comes to us from the much maligned pacifier. Like earlier investigators, I have found that pacifier suckers never develop thumbsucking. Why? Because, we infer, their sucking has been completed in another way. So with the children I have studied who have somehow sucked at toys or used other methods of getting pacifiers; they did not develop thumbsucking."

Prevention Rather than Cure

DR. LEVY concludes that "the onset of the habit coincides with the diminution in sucking time." As to treatment, he says, "It follows from the facts noted that the rational treatment of fingersucking is prophylactic, and is directed toward insuring sufficient action of the lips during feeding. Good results often come from regulating the time given the infant to suck when feeding. A rapidly flowing breast from which the infant soon gets a full stomach causes him to finish his meal before he has enough of the sucking itself. This can be obviated by pumping the milk into a bottle and regulating the speed of flow with the rubber nipple. Increasing the number of feedings in twenty-four hours may also be helpful."

If something must be sucked, neither Dr. Levy nor any of the other discussants could see anything against a well made, sterile pacifier which, it was agreed, is a more desirable alternative than the thumb. "A solid rubber pacifier easily cleansed" has definite uses. Apparently our aesthetic prejudices will have to be laid aside.

Nursery school procedure, as discussed by Miss Harriet M. Johnson, is very illuminating because it deals with somewhat older children and suggests practical ways of meeting familiar situations:

"We make our attack indirectly, as we do on other habits which we wish to modify. Strong preferences, shyness, fears, the reliance on the familiar—all those are habits that we think are thwarting rather than developing, but we never press the point or make the child aware of our interest in it. Our job is to set up competing and more satisfying attractions.

"Naptime sucking is what we are most sure to meet. In our school we put the children to sleep in sleep-

ing bags. We don't do it if there is some definite objection. The reason for it is that it lets the child kick the covers off and stay alone while going to sleep. And in the majority of cases thumbsucking is just an automatic, infantile remnant, which is dropped at once with this sort of mechanical device which is not directed to the elbow or thumb, but justifies itself to the child for its obvious purpose, and yet takes care of the thumb automatically. If the baby is a very persistent thumbsucker and resists and resents even that mechanical arrangement, we do not force it. We let the child find his thumb and satisfy his desire if he wishes. All the time, however, we press the advantage, that is, increasing familiarity with our situation, the sense of security which the nursery school is building up. We press it to the point of ultimately adjusting the bag and doing away with that particular opportunity for thumbsucking. But we never show any particular interest and never by any means put a habit on the moral plane as either good or bad.

"Daytime sucking is, of course, rather more complicated. Children suck their thumbs when kept from activity they want to be doing, particularly if taken away from something they are enjoying, to go to the toilet for instance. That reminds a child to suck his thumb even if he has not been doing it when he is active. We try, of course, always to let the child take his time, if we can. We try never to interrupt an occupation that is absorbing, but there are times when it has to be done. In that case, we always try to give the child something that will employ his hands. We offer him a string of safety pins, perhaps, to which he hasn't generally access as play material. We may give him a few little blocks that he can arrange and rearrange. I know all the vices which are supposed to arise as a result of his dependence on that sort of thing, but as a matter of fact, they do not. Along with this program there is going on a very dynamic sort of living which for the most part takes care of itself, and the child is more eager to get back to his original occupation than he is to sit on the toilet and play with safety pins.

With the Toddler

"HE sucks when bored—and he does get bored with one activity sometimes, and yet has not enough initiative to go out seeking another. In that case we set before him some compelling situation, preferably with the group, which will lure him more than sitting down and sucking.

"Sometimes, instead of being bored, he is tired. Then we do the same sort of thing, only instead of

making it an active pursuit, we try to introduce something which he can do sitting down; for instance, the sandbox. As he sits in the sand he perhaps is transferring his finger or thumb interest to the use of his hands in the sand and the play with sand toys. Or something may interest him at a table or lying on the floor—drawing material or some sort of puzzle, a toy that will make him relax enough to rest. In a good many instances we find that a child will give up an activity that he cannot press through to a satisfactory conclusion; and, thumbsucking or not, we try to make sure that when a child begins doing something that he has any sort of interest in, he is helped to bring it through to a performance that satisfies him unless he is attempting something so far beyond his ability that it is quite hopeless."

Miss Johnson summed up the conclusion so repeatedly emphasized: "Where a child's thumbsucking has passed beyond the early infantile level and become really serious, he sucks when he is thwarted. I am very sure that, as I have watched children, it is a retreat. It is a compensation for something that is going wrong."

Wiser parents have possibly never been too con-

cerned about the evils of thumbsucking in infants, observing that they were more contented thus. And in those rarer cases where dental malocclusion or other permanent malformations are actually threatened, we are today in a better position than previously to base our treatment on a more accurate knowledge of the factors which produced the behavior in question. In older children thumbsucking represents not so much an infantile "habit" which remains because parents failed in their duty of "breaking it early," as a compensation for insecurity and thwarting in the child's emotional adjustments. It therefore becomes the parents' obligation to search for causes within the routine and the relationships of the child's daily life and correct the trouble at its source.

And finally, this discussion makes it apparent that the question of thumbsucking is of importance not only in itself, but because it serves as a prototype for more recent methods of approach to the whole matter of "bad habits." More and more the tendency is to leave to the growth process itself much that was once deemed legitimate territory for parental interference.

Concerning Masturbation

When age-old prejudices and fears are discounted, this "problem," like many others, is seen to be only one phase of the child's training and development.

EDWARD H. LISS

MASTURBATION is a complex constellation of symptoms. It is probably the least understood and the most baffling of all psychologically significant problems of childhood. Its interpretation is colored by prejudice, superstition, ignorance and conjecture. The scientific significance of this mechanism is slowly being evaluated, but considering the age-long interest which this practice must have aroused, the data available is strikingly scant. The deep rooted reactions and feelings inspired by any discussion of this manifestation add to the general confusion, and to the difficulty of considering it objectively.

I wish to insist that my approach to the subject of masturbation is a scientific rather than a moral

one. The moral significance is outside the province of this paper.

Do we find masturbation in normal children and do we find it in early childhood? The answer to both of these questions is, emphatically, yes. Those of us who have dealt with children in their early development from a purely physical standpoint have material to prove this. Its manifestation in boys is more easily detected than in girls. If one can remove a common reluctance to observe this phenomenon one must admit that it is quite general.

If we are considering primarily the practical questions of parents who wish to know what should be done about it, masturbation may be divided into two broad classes. First it may be considered as a

psycho-biologic normality. In early childhood, before the seventh year, it usually appears to mark a certain natural stage in psycho-sexual development. This kind of masturbation simply signifies an interest which has progressed from other parts and functions of the body to the genital region.

Levels of Development

THE infant's interests are first centered about the mouth. With development he enlarges his interest and takes in the rest of the body, particularly the excretory organs and their functions. These become fields for pleasurable investigation.

Even as a normal manifestation, the primitive pleasure in masturbation is mitigated by a guilt mechanism expressed in varying degrees of anxiety. To a certain extent this element of guilt is essentially inherent, irrespective of the understanding with which the parents approach the child and his problem. The degree of guilt felt, as well as the cleverness of the individual child, will determine the subtleties through which he seeks to gratify the original pleasure element without too keenly arousing unfriendly reactions, not only from the external world, but also from within himself.

One can see the difficulty, from the technical point of view, of attempting to evaluate the many symptoms which may fall within this category. And yet, recognizing its place in the child's total development, we cannot fail to consider a certain amount of masturbation as a biological landmark.

But if it is stubborn in its persistence and carried on excessively, or over a long period of time, we must reconsider our first evaluation and interpret it as an index of emotional instability and environmental maladjustment. Parents would be better able to deal with masturbation intelligently if their own reactions were as comparatively mild toward it as toward habit practices involving other parts of the body. Even thumbsucking, which many parents regard with such concern, can be met by them more objectively.

But even if we discount prejudice, there are real difficulties in regarding masturbation simply as a habit practice. It is not only deeply embedded in the child's innermost emotional development, but also, by the time it is recognized as a problem, it is chronologically further advanced—that is, it has been going on for a longer time, and the combating forces within the child are therefore more firmly entrenched. When we come to consider masturbation as a matter for education, we have to take into account all of the child's previous conditioning and habit formation.

This includes his whole training regime and particularly that part of it having to do with eating problems and with elimination. His present habit formations are influenced by previous experiences which the child has met with when other habits were being handled. The present is colored by the past.

Any situation in which the child, justly or unjustly, regards the environment as unfriendly may incite a flight to this or any other type of release. If stagnation or frustration has developed somewhere in the course of adjustment during infancy and early childhood, masturbation may thus act as a safety valve. Its psychic value as an outlet is utilized by the child in proportion to the amount of repression imposed upon his activities by the restrictions either of an individual or of his environment.

Conscience is a personal element; it is a variable entity. Determining the degree of reaction to any act, it varies with the person and gives rise to the amazing variety of responses to any educating technique. Apparent indifference is not to be judged at its face value; it may be used as a shield to cover up a deep sensitivity. This must be kept in mind when we take in hand the question of softening the child's feeling of guilt.

The scientific evaluation of masturbation entails the knowledge of the complete inner life of the individual from birth to the present time. It is most important for parents to remember that they can accomplish one vital step toward psychic health when masturbation is handled unemotionally, and that this attitude on their part helps materially to allay the child's sense of guilt which is always present.

Where Help Is Needed

A PERSISTENCE of this habit, after parents have done their best to meet it, would indicate some deep seated lack of adjustment and would suggest that both parents and child need help from someone who has the technical knowledge and professional experience to treat serious emotional disturbances.

The attitudes toward masturbation suggested here have also a more general significance because they are the practical application of two principles which are of paramount importance in presentday concepts of child training: Many "problems" are simply phases of the child's development and with wise handling will solve themselves. Where they pass beyond this normal phase and become really serious, parents should treat them, not as cause for discipline and punishment, but as symptoms of emotional disturbance, calling just as much for the best professional care as do symptoms of physical illness.

Common or Garden Delinquencies

What looks to parents and teachers like naughtiness is just as often the result of inexperience as of intention.

LOIS A. MEREDITH

FOR every child who is haled to court before the judge or the psychiatrist, there are untold numbers who at one time or another sorely try the patience of the adults most interested in their welfare. These minor fallings from grace are the common or garden varieties of misbehavior which are bound to happen when active children are developing through experience in their environment.

There seems fairly general agreement that children learn to get along with people by being constantly associated with them; they learn responsibility by carrying responsibility; they learn the consequences of actions through behaving one way or another and seeing what happens. Courtesy, consideration, honesty, prudence, judgment, courage, independence—all the mature characteristics society expects to find in adults living with people—are largely acquired by process of a child's living with people. Playing and working with things, reacting to people, feeling the effects of their reactions, meeting the consequences of one's own behavior, adapting to situations, using these experiences for more working, living, reacting, and accepting or not accepting the consequences—this is the process whereby a child grows.

A child's adjustment to the standards of behavior expected of him may not always be easy. The description of the first adjustment a child must make as "being sent down the chimney into a strange family group and having to learn to get along somehow with those individuals he finds there" partly expresses the arbitrary appearance of the requirements laid by the social group upon a young child. Most normal, active children learn to adjust, as we say, but this adjustment rarely occurs without some strain.

Delinquencies have been classified in various ways—stealing, lying, destructiveness, incorrigibility, cruelty, sex activity, insolence, insubordination, and so forth—and the appearance of any of these causes concern on the part of adults in proportion to the discrepancy between the child's behavior and the standards a particular group expects of him.

Are there common varieties of misbehavior which,

occurring in children, need cause no particular concern, misbehavior that is to be expected in the progress of a child's development from infancy to the goal we are pleased to call "emotional maturity?" Are there common delinquencies that are an inevitable result of a child's living in relation to his environment, which in general is made up of two component parts—things and people?

Two sources of information have recently provided the writer with some answers to the question—first, observation, as a visiting teacher, of normal children in homes or at school; second, conversation with young adults who as students of child psychology, were willing to review the escapades of the past. Each one of the latter groups tried to recall any behavior which, though it had brought down punishment by seriously disturbed adults, had nevertheless occurred with no intention of wrong doing but simply as the result of absorbing activity that produced unforeseen consequences.

Experimenting with fire appeared several times in the recounting of episodes. Two small girls, aged six and seven, played "keeping house" one afternoon beside a haystack on the paternal farm. The shady side of the stack provided the spot for the furniture, and a little brick kiln built by the children against the stack itself was the stove, where baking and brewing were going on. All would have been well, had not one of the children "laid a fire" with little sticks, a piece of realism which led as the next move to a match for kindling it. The participant who recalled the story stated that there never were "two more surprised children" than they when the flame ran up the side of the haystack. They took their dolls and fled. Hours later, when the stack was nothing but charred embers, and valiant efforts on the part of the adults had barely prevented the barn from catching fire, two badly frightened little girls were discovered hiding in a cellar. Brought in for accounting, they did not suffer so much—so the story goes—from the punishment that followed as from the sense of injustice due to the assumption on the part of their parents

that setting fire to the haystack had been a piece of deliberate mischief. Without any additional punishment from adults, they would have learned their lesson about the results of playing with fire.

All in the Point of View

It is true that during so short a time as the last ten years parents have gained much insight into the motives behind the child's misdeeds. But it will never be too easy to make the necessary adjustments between standards so different as those of child and adult. A mother, seriously disturbed about her eight-year-old son's disregard for property, recently complained to a teacher about his "destructive tendencies." The question "just what had he done?" revealed that Jimmie had wanted a scooter. Family finances did not allow the immediate purchase of a scooter, a situation Jimmie had apparently accepted. Some time later, the mother discovered Jimmie's roller skates—an expensive gift from a relative—thrown beside the back porch, minus wheels. Jimmie had used the wheels for a scooter which he had made out of a packing box.

Other examples of Jimmie's destructiveness proved similar. Nevertheless, Jimmie's mother had some difficulty in recognizing that the trouble between her and her young son lay not so much in his willful desire to destroy property, as in two different points of view concerning the value of the property destroyed. Jimmie's mother considered the costly roller skates of greater value than a packing box scooter. But Jimmie did not, and efforts to convince him, naturally, only deepened his sense of injustice.

Property values have to be learned by children, and herein lies another problem, particularly for the younger child. Stealing usually appears near the top of any list of delinquencies, and the occurrence of stealing by a child usually causes considerable emotional disturbance on the part of parents, a concern sometimes warranted and sometimes not. Two examples serve to show that daily affairs pertaining to money and property which adults take for granted may not be fully understood by children.

The young son of a man of modest income showed resentment when his father told him he couldn't have the dollar he asked for.

"Why can't I?" he said. "You only need to go to the bank and get more."

The simple fact that father could draw from a bank only what he put in had never been presented to him.

One young woman never forgot the punishment meted out to her by her parents because at the age of nine she charged several purchases to her father.

She said, "I had no idea of doing wrong by running up a bill without permission. It may have been stupid of me, but I had seen mother charge things and give no money, and I really thought that charging meant you didn't have to pay. I learned my lesson, but I always felt I didn't deserve the punishment. What I hated most was that I was made to feel I had done something dishonest."

An actual episode of stealing in an eight-year-old, while more serious than either of these, again should have caused concern about external circumstances rather than about inherent character. A bright boy of eight, but small for his age, was skipped to the fourth grade because of outstandingly superior work, and, of course, the parents were proud and pleased. They failed to notice another aspect of the situation, that this child was not accepted by the other, larger boys in his class, who teased him.

The child had one satisfactory day, however, when he won approval by treating his whole class to candy, soda, gum and even money. The satisfaction lasted until the teacher reported to the mother, who in turn discovered ten dollars missing from her purse, and added to the child's already heavy emotional burden her own horror at "discovering her son was a thief."

Here, lack of friends and not inborn thievery was the problem. Stealing was a means to an end; and, at the time, the child himself had no particular concern with his acts apart from their purpose. His aim, and an important one, was to become somehow a part of his social group.

Numerous and more usual illustrations could be cited of the taking of money or the using of others' property as a means to an end, where the desired goal or activity absorbs for the time being consideration of the consequences. Taking and spoiling articles of clothing of other members of the family for use in theatricals, carrying off property from empty lots or houses, are cases in point.

Misinterpreting Sex Play

SEX activity and sex curiosity, usually placed high among delinquencies, are particularly open to adult misinterpretation. The observation of children and the recalling of childhood episodes by adults again reveal that the consequences are very apt to be based not so much upon the child's activity as upon the experience of the adult.

One recalled experience concerned a group of little children, both boys and girls, aged seven to nine, playing some game that required costumes. Some old gunny sacks served the purpose and the children

undressed and arrayed themselves and each other in the sacks. The horrified mother who discovered them punished her child for undressing before the boys and for putting on the dirty sacks, neither of which the children, absorbed in a theatrical game, had considered of any importance.

Another episode related by a mother who handled it more wisely illustrates that children need not always cause concern on the part of parents even when their activities seem to imply undue sex interest. A six-year-old girl was playing with a little boy who was spending the afternoon at her home. From active outdoor games, the children turned to "playing house" in the playroom. The mother passing the open door saw—and was shocked to see—that the two had lowered the shades and had gone to bed. Checking an impulse to rush in and rescue her small daughter, she paused long enough to see that the children were lying quietly on their backs with hands above their heads, holding an animated conversation about Chicago gangsters. The mother retired to a distance which still gave full view of the children, and presently saw them arise, raise the shades, and set about the business of cooking breakfast, getting father off to work, and the children—an ill-assorted group of dolls—ready for school. Any activities growing out of as natural a game as "father and mother" are occasion for supervision certainly, but not for concern, reprimands, punishments or fears on the part of the parents.

Unpredictable Adults

ACTIVITY in experimenting with things in the world about them and with accepted group standards is not the only source of difficulty in the growing up process. Adaptation to individual people, particularly to adults, is a necessary requirement placed upon the growing child. This is not always easy in a world of individuals each with his own feelings, attitudes, hobbies and pet abominations. To quote Bernard Shaw in *Parents and Children*:

"There is a point at which every person with human nerves has to say to a child 'Stop that noise.' But suppose the child asks why! The simplest [answer] 'Because it irritates me' may fail; for it may strike the child as . . . amusing to irritate you; also the child, having comparatively no nerves, may be unable to conceive your meaning vividly enough . . . You may therefore have to explain that the effect of the irritation will be that you will do something unpleasant if the noise continues."

Logical reasons for adult responses may be highly desirable in child training, but the fact remains—

desirable or no—that children must learn to get along with a variety of adults who not only react to irritation, but also react in a variety of ways. Unreasoning or incomprehensible, those reactions nevertheless represent a part of a child's surroundings.

Trouble begins as soon as three-year-old Billy announces that he doesn't like Aunt Lizzie and refuses to kiss her when she arrives, bursting with gifts and affection. And Billy usually learns to curb his frankness. The process continues as Billy widens his acquaintance to relatives, neighbors and teachers. Sizing up other people's attitudes and feelings, and gauging behavior accordingly, is an art in which too much should not be expected of young children. The spoiled six-year-old who expects teacher to behave toward him as mother does, because he has been trained to act that way, not only is causing trouble, but is also facing a first difficult problem.

A Square Peg

MISBEHAVIOR clearly based on inability to adapt readily to a new and different personality was shown in twelve-year-old Edward, transferred from a private school in England to a public school in a large American city. Edward had been accustomed to a regime where the children had a large share in planning and carrying through activity, where suggestions from the children were welcomed. The new class was one with a definite day's schedule, lessons entirely planned and specifically assigned by a very competent teacher. Two weeks later, Edward was "sent to the office" for "impudence." A mild reprimand from a busy principal apparently had no effect, for a week later he was returned, with a more emphatic complaint of "impudence and insubordination."

Edward's difficulty proved not serious, and from the point of view of the boy, due to neither impudence nor lack of cooperation. He had simply carried over behavior expected in one school into another where it was not expected. He had given his opinion about some of the work, and a suggestion or two about "a better way" of doing something. Not meeting the expected response from the teacher, he reacted by antagonism and a feeling of being unjustly treated. Behind the "insubordination" lay the very simple fact that two people—one of whom happened to be a child—with backgrounds and attitudes too widely different, met and were unable to get along. Adjustment to such a situation should not be difficult unless the adult makes it so.

Illustrations such as these give one important suggestion for parents and teachers of the middle school years. The circumstances of the misbehavior, the

child's own interpretation of why he did as he did, are usually more important than the results of the action, either on haystacks or adult emotions. We as adults need to hold continually in suspicion our own interpretations of children's behavior. Fires set by children with an uncontrollable impulse to set fire to things cause, to be sure, no more damage than those started by young children intent on play. But the motives behind the first are serious and need to be dealt with in full consciousness of their possibilities whereas the latter should not be overweighted by the seriousness of their consequences. Impudence on the part of the boy who habitually defies all authority, and that on the part of one who is bewildered and

hurt by an attitude he cannot understand may look the same on the surface, but one is serious and one is not—or need not be unless adults make it so. There is need for us as adults to learn to distinguish common or garden varieties of delinquencies from similar blooms of a noxious kind.

And as for the children, as they learn by living in this world of people and things, making mistakes because of lack of knowledge—they may well take the advice of Mr. Shaw, again from *Parents and Children*:

"Ask the person who scolds you whether he or she supposes you did it on purpose. . . . Remember that the progress of the world depends on your knowing better than your elders."

Rubbing the Wrong Way

Adolescent friction may aggravate misunderstandings between parent and child—or polish rough spots off youth's new found maturity.

EDWARD A. STRECKER

SINCE adolescence is like a gateway between childhood and adulthood, in dealing with its problems and frictions one must intellectually emulate Janus, the two-faced God of the ancient Romans, who looked forward and backward at the same time. This, however, is a difficult thing for most of us to do, since our tendency is to regard immediate situations as monumental, forgetting the past which formed them and disregarding the future which is their goal.

In dealing with adolescence, I think we must first understand all its physiological changes and their psychological effects, as many of the traits peculiar to this age spring from one or the other of these bases. To begin with, the entire endocrine, or ductless gland, system is stirred up. This is due to the maturing of the sex organs and the completion of the action of the thyroid and particularly of the pituitary glands. In girls, the breasts develop and the menstrual periods appear; in boys the testes mature and their action is completed. The voice is in the process known as "changing." The skin is likely to be blotchy, and the figure in either sex is often "thick" or "stringy," until the endocrine system becomes equalized and functions smoothly. One can readily understand the embarrassment due to purely physical causes such as a squeaky voice, pimples, a sudden development of the

breasts, and so on. And added to these things is very often a misinformed mind which makes anything pertaining to sex ugly, embarrassing or laughable. This last is, to my mind, one of the most influential factors of adolescence, since during adolescence the child cannot escape the manifestations of sex. The training and information previously given in the home has colored his ideas of sex and will so color his emotional attitudes during adolescence.

The adolescent is a victim of rapidly varying moods which are most trying to cope with from the parents' point of view. This is a natural factor of the period because youth retains many infantile emotional reactions and ideas while groping to reach intellectual and emotional maturity. Many parents make the double mistake of treating the adolescent as they would a three-year-old baby and at the same time, expecting him to react in an adult way.

Adults look subjectively rather than objectively at the boy or girl who in turn regards them suspiciously and even at times with hostility. One of the many problems of this age is "hurt feelings." It is likely that there is no age where everything seems so fraught with obscure meanings as adolescence. The smallest and, to the adult, most insignificant incident is liable to transport the adolescent to the heights of bliss or

depths of despair. Ridicule, either real or fancied, is enough to make some of the more sensitive victims of this trying period contemplate suicide, while the less sensitive ones make plans, usually abortive, to run away from home. Most of this hurt can be avoided with understanding and intelligent handling of the situation. For instance, if parents realize that the plans, ideas and problems of their child are truly serious to him, if they discuss them with understanding and without humorous comments at the youngster's expense, if they give attention and respect to his point of view, not only will they avoid many of the "hurt feelings" but they may be fairly certain of their child's confidence in them as advisors.

Very often there would be less friction between parents and children if the parents could realize that the particular problems presented by their children differ only in superficial form from the incidents of their own adolescence and are no more serious.

The herd instinct is probably the basis of the most difficult struggles and conflicts both between the parents and adolescents and within the adolescent mind. This is easily understandable, since it is this instinct that governs largely the adjustments of the human being to society. It is very strongly marked at all ages but more particularly and peculiarly during adolescence. The teens age feels he must be in the good graces of whatever social group he moves in; he must not "be diff'rent" in anything that this group of adolescents considers essential. Many of these so-called "essentials" are frowned upon by the parents of individual members of the group. These unfortunate children are thrown at once into emotional conflict. They can bear neither to endure the scorn of their friends nor to see their parents "lose caste" in the eyes of these most critical judges; at the same time, the infantile side of their own development makes them want to please their parents.

Conflicting Loyalties

THE struggle is difficult and often disastrous, particularly where both the parents and the group remain adamant. If the adults were to realize the mental torture their son or daughter may be undergoing, often over a small thing, many of them, I am sure, would try to effect a compromise. Usually, the unfortunate child, where no help comes from either side, tries to please both. His days are miserable, lying to his parents at home, and at school keeping up with the crowd as far as possible while making excuses to the crowd for father's and mother's "meanness." This particular conflict is readily seen in the case of Mary, a sixteen-year-old sophomore in high

school. Her parents are very strict. They want her to seem "better brought up" than the other girls, and they don't "believe in" the modern ideas. Mary's great ambition is to go with a particular group of young people whose clannish social life excites the envy of the rest of the school. They are the popular, pretty, gay girls and the dashing "men of the world" football players. To be taken into this charmed circle would be the acme of bliss. Her chance comes when the football captain invites her to a game and dance in the neighboring town. This involves driving five or six miles in his car. She is thrilled beyond belief. She is "popular!" But her parents don't understand all that this invitation involves. They just see that she is going to drive five miles at night with a boy who, though they may have known him and his parents for years, has suddenly become a menace and a danger. They flatly refuse to allow her to go. No tears, pleadings or threats move them.

Mary's problem becomes acute. Her adolescent sensitiveness and latent fear of not seeming "grown up" make it practically impossible for her to tell the boy the truth—that she is "not allowed" to go—and she feels that she will lose her chance of ever being taken into this clique which would gratify her every ambition. She is filled with feelings of inferiority and resentment. Why should her parents make an example of her? Why can't she do as the others do? It never occurs to her that many of the other girls and boys are probably in the same boat. In her morbidly sensitive mind, she stands alone and her parents are deliberately, to her way of thinking, subjecting her to mental torture; just to gratify a whim of their own, they are making her, "a grown-up girl," look like a silly child.

Such parents are only doing what they consider right for their child; but it is a questionable right. If the child is not allowed to fit into the social scheme as it is at whatever particular time the problem arises, he will feel "odd" and inferior, a self-depreciation which may hamper his whole development. Of course, there are adjustments to be made on both sides. No sensible parent will allow children to run wild, doing as they please in every way irrespective of whether the effect of the individual action is injurious or beneficial. Nor would these parents like to think that their children, for whom they have struggled and sacrificed and whose characters they have made great efforts to develop to the best that is in them, would lie to them or doubt their wisdom. The average adolescent put in a corner will do either or both, not from choice but, so far as he sees, from necessity.

In Mary's case there is another, more subtle, danger. Why, she wonders, do her parents object to her

riding in the boy's car at night and not in the day time? Why is it disgusting for the other girls' mothers to allow them to go? These questions are in Mary's mind and again sex enters the problem. The attitude of her parents, though probably unmentioned by them, is quickly transferred to the child's resentful mind and may take root there and grow into ugly, misshapen thoughts or an abnormal curiosity, either of which may lead her into the very difficulties her parents have undergone such scenes to avoid.

Surely, in this case a compromise would be the better way. Wise parents, realizing what going with these youngsters will mean to their daughter, and how much self-confidence and poise it will give her within herself, even though they see some undesirable points, will give their permission with some reservations. They might suggest that three or four go together and return home at a reasonable hour. This would usually satisfy all concerned.

Then with an eye to the future, they would make a point of getting to know and command the respect of these "growing up babies" and try in tactful ways to influence their pastimes. The younger people will be flattered by the intelligent, friendly and above all understanding and respectful interest the adults take in their ideas.

Pointers for Adults

ONE fact to consider is that often the social life of the adolescent members of a group or community is patterned on that of the elders of the same set. It may differ in form but not in fundamental. So when we criticize the youngster let us first look carefully at his pattern. As the baby imitates words, so the adolescent imitates ideas and ideals. He longs to seem grown-up and sophisticated and must look to older people. This is the greatest weapon of adults if used wisely.

"Puppy love," another source of worry to parents, is but one more normal phase of adolescence. If the child has had sex intelligently explained and the incidents of his youthful love affairs are treated with understanding and not made either ugly or ridiculous by those in authority, the average youngster will sail through the tragic and blissful period of adolescent love and emerge ready to enter a more mature emotional relationship. If, however, these puppy loves are regardlessly ridiculed, trampled under foot and made the object of joking, then a sensitive child's development may be seriously warped.

There are in the lives of adolescents and their parents countless daily situations, impossible to anticipate individually or to meet by specific rule. Some

general attitudes toward the adolescent and the hazards which beset his path are helpful:

Become thoroughly acquainted with the physiological changes and their psychological effect on the child.

Prepare the child as gently and thoroughly as possible for this stage of development so that the outstanding physical symptoms do not cause too much apprehension and embarrassment when they appear. This is sometimes enough of a shock to the nervous system to do permanent damage.

Avoid overt and unnecessary criticism and particularly public rebuke. The adolescent is sensitive to an extreme degree and will feel only resentment at any situation which makes him appear foolish or childish. If the problem is serious enough to need adult advice, give it, if possible, in such a way that the boy or girl believes it is his own idea.

Study the particular child in question. Each adolescent is an individual, not governed by set rules.

Try to look at the question from the adolescent's point of view. Things that seem small and insignificant to an adult may be of infinite importance in the devious make-up of the adolescent mind. Often if the parent realized this, bitter resentments and heartaches in the child would be averted and the parent's real authority in more serious problems increased.

Remember the adolescent tendency to want to appear grown-up and that those actions symbolic to the child of maturity must necessarily be borrowed from older people. Do not be too quick to criticize the child. Try to trace the pattern of his behavior and see from whence it came and deal with it accordingly.

Refrain from arousing feelings of resentment in the child and from making him feel ridiculous in the eyes of himself or others by recalling incidents of his childhood. Though he may laugh at them in later years, they make him feel ashamed or inferior during this trying period. Remember life in the teens is indeed very serious.

Expect a wide range of emotional reactions varying from complete infantilism to mature judgment. Remember adolescence is a transitional stage retaining many childish qualities even while developing adult reactions.

Be sure to take into consideration the training you as a parent have given the child in his early years and don't expect the adolescent to become adult overnight merely because he has somewhat matured physically. Since the fundamental reactions of the adolescent to the particular problem are probably the result of his earlier environment and conditioning, the way he works out his problem and the solution he reaches depend on what emotional adjustments he has been making since childhood.

Parents' Questions and Discussion

These pages, based on the foregoing articles, are presented for the use of individuals or of groups having this topic on their regular programs. Questions and discussion are taken from study group records.

STUDY GROUP DEPARTMENT

CÉCILE PILPEL, Director — JOSETTE FRANK, Editor

What, if anything, should a mother do about masturbation in a three-year-old child?

If the mother understands something of the meaning of masturbation in the sexual growth of the individual, she is more likely to act intelligently than if she is merely told to do, or not to do such and such. Although this practice is so common in children of this age as to be regarded as "normal," nevertheless in each child it has individual coloring and meaning. On no account should a child be told that it is "naughty," "dirty," "will make him sick," or otherwise threatened in a way likely to terrify or burden him with guilt in the matter. If he is healthy, active and happy, it is best ignored entirely. If, however, he is excessively shy, fearful or unfriendly, and seems maladjusted in general, the masturbation must be regarded as a symptom of more deep seated conflicts, calling for professional advice.

A boy of six who has just started to attend public school, is using bad language which he picks up from the other boys.

We have to distinguish between language that is simply colloquial and therefore out of harmony with our traditions, and language that is definitely vulgar and objectionable. Children will adopt the former type in order to be regarded as "regular fellows." The latter may offer the child various kinds of satisfaction. It sometimes represents a gesture of independence, or perhaps a revolt against a too genteel home standard. Or it may be the child's way of calling attention to himself, in an atmosphere where he has little opportunity to shine, and where he knows his language will be at least conspicuous. When a greater variety of interests absorbs the child's attention this particular form of expression (if not kept alive by parental displeasure) will no longer be needed.

What can be done with a seven-year-old who dawdles with her dressing and other routines, necessitating constant nagging to get her ready in time for school and other scheduled activities?

There are a number of factors to be considered. Physiologically, some individuals are less able than others to accomplish easily the operations involved in dressing. This affects the tempo of the individual child as well as of the adult. Besides, reasons for hurrying which seem important to us may not be impressive to the child. The process of dressing—once its techniques have been mastered—cannot be expected to be as interesting to a seven-year-old as the things with which she may be preoccupied. Perhaps the prospect of what is to follow when she has finished dressing, school or lunch or an afternoon at the park, is not interesting either. Dressing might be expedited if something pleasurable is arranged to come next, or if the tiresome dressing routine is lightened by pleasant company or some kind of accompanying fun. A certain amount of dawdling is to be expected in the routinized living of our children. With most children it will take care of itself as richer activities develop. Meantime a helping hand to expedite the routine now and then would be preferable to the constant irritation of adult nagging based on adult time-sense.

Habitually untidy about her room and personal appearance, a nine-year-old girl seems to be unaffected by all efforts to train her to be neat.

Here again we have to realize that our adult standards of neatness are not of concern to the child. The healthy child is primarily interested in living, and our adult concept of "order" is, for her, beside the point. With those children who have a strong aesthetic sense, there is likely to be less untidiness. But, by and large, we must take a certain

amount of untidiness for granted as a normal accompaniment of mental and physical activity. Perhaps our best course would be to single out one phase of orderliness, such as the putting away of her school books in a definite place, and to see that she does this daily. If this is done consistently, but in a friendly spirit, she may come to feel a certain satisfaction in finding things in their places; and this may, in time, carry over into other practices. Our reminders must not degenerate into nagging, however, and will not if we check our adult reactions about order, and avoid overemphasizing its importance in the child's scheme of things.

How can "sneakiness" be handled?

A usually trustworthy boy of eight is beginning to do many things surreptitiously, such as going to neighborhood places when he knows he shouldn't.

We must be sure that the child has a growing freedom commensurate with his legitimate needs and capacities; but we must expect that every child will want more freedom than can safely or wisely be given him. Children will react variously to this situation. One child will become openly rebellious, aggressively demanding greater freedom. But, another, feeling equally the urge to do what he wants to do but less able to face thwarting or to take the consequences of his misdeeds, will resort to surreptitious means as the easiest way of getting what he wants. We have to regard this as normal; but also we have to help this child to meet his difficulty in healthier ways. We can make him understand, and to some extent accept, the reasons for the restraints which he has thrown aside so lightly. At the same time such a child needs our help in acquiring the strength to withstand certain temptations for the sake of his own best development. This will be a slow growth.

Brother and sister, aged ten and eight, quarrel constantly. Should the parents interfere or let them "fight it out?"

A certain amount of dissension between children in the family is to be expected. Children of different ages are bound to have different interests. Since they are constrained to the sharing of many things—play space, equipment and the daily routines, as well as the more subtle sharing of parental attention—some conflict is inevitable. We can, however, minimize these quarrels by understanding their immediate causes, and so eliminating some occasions for them. A special effort can be made to provide each child with play activities and companionship on his or her own age level. Since jealousy often plays

a part in children's quarrels, the particular interests and abilities of each child should have an equal share of the parental attention and emphasis. Comparisons between the two should, of course, be avoided, and each helped to feel that he has a valid and useful contribution to make to the other as well as to the family group. Children's quarrels do demand that the adult interfere—not, however, in the capacity of judge or policeman, but rather as interpreter of the difficulties.

A girl of eleven has an annoying habit of clearing her throat before every sentence. Can anything be done about this?

This type of manifestation is not uncommon at the onset of adolescence, when to the normal strains of physiological changes is added the challenge of new social demands. This particular manifestation will, no doubt, take care of itself and disappear in a short time. But it is important to inquire whether this is a single nervous mannerism or is one of many symptoms of emotional difficulty in this girl's adjustment. In the latter case, it may have implications far more significant than merely an annoying habit. There may be needed a readjustment of the child's whole existence to relieve strain or pressure to which she is being subjected. To avoid humiliating her, no reference to the particular difficulty should be made. Expression of annoyance on the part of others can in no way be helpful. Rather, this would have the effect of increasing the difficulty. Every effort should be made to find the cause, whether physical or emotional, and to center attention upon that.

A father is horrified to discover that on the report card brought home by his twelve-year-old son the marks have been skilfully changed from the school's unsatisfactory ones. Does this indicate a serious defect in the boy's character?

It is obvious that the boy's act indicates rather a fear of parental displeasure. To know what it indicates in regard to the boy's character, one would have to know more about the boy and the circumstances. Certainly by this behavior he shows that he is unable to "face the music." It may be that he is held to a standard of achievement beyond his abilities. He may have also an intense need for the approval and acceptance which he feels that only this kind of success can win for him. If this is so, school and home expectations must be so modified as to be based upon his own real ability rather than upon an arbitrary standard; and he must be given a satisfying assurance of security in the family.

A bright and capable boy of twelve procrastinates with his homework, so that it is never done unless he is allowed to stay up long past a reasonable bedtime hour to do it. Is his bedtime more important to insist upon than the homework?

There is no question of a choice between bedtime and homework. If the homework demands are so heavy as to take up all his daylight time it is reasonable to expect that he would take this way out. In that case the matter calls for adjustment with the school. Possibly, however, the homework is being deliberately held as an excuse for postponing bed-

time or the necessary isolation from the company of the adults. If his schedule is rearranged so that some desirable occupation will follow homework, this may serve as a natural incentive for getting the homework done. He may need special help from the teacher in one subject—or perhaps some suggestions on the technique of studying alone. Again, some children have less time-sense than others, and need the help of an adult in planning their out-of-school time allotments. Whatever hour is decided upon for homework, this should then be insisted upon just as certainly as the daily going to school.

STUDY MATERIAL: EVERYDAY PROBLEMS

TOPICAL OUTLINE

1. What Constitutes a Problem

- Definite undesirable behavior
- Difficulty of adjustment in relationship of child to parent or other adult to other children
- Personality difficulty of the child himself

2. Everyday Problems with Serious Implications

- Prolonged or excessive manifestation
- Regression to a less mature stage
- Emotional over-reaction

3. Treatment of Everyday Problems

- No situation should be considered alone, but always in relation to the child's nature, needs, activities, age and other factors
- A problem is a signpost or a symptom pointing the way to a study of underlying causes
- Direct action—punishing or rewarding—is emergency treatment, but not educative

4. Value of Adult Concern

- To understand the child better
- To help him understand himself
- To help him live in his own world

PROBLEMS

1. Is punishment ever educative? On what basis can one justify its use? Cite an example where an everyday problem was successfully treated by a specific punishment.
2. If masturbation is not considered wicked or physically harmful, why is it to be overcome? How?

3. Name typical everyday problems which are problems only because a desirable interest is directed into undesirable or inappropriate channels. How can such difficulties be met?

4. Why is it practically impossible to be helpful by giving specific answers to questions of procedure, as "How can I make my three-year-old control his temper?" or "What shall I do to my eight-month-old baby to make him stop sucking his thumb?"

5. What considerations—if any—would justify parents in strictly forbidding certain activities of a teens age boy or girl?

REFERENCE READING

- The Behavior of Young Children*
Vol. II. Dressing, Toilet, Washing
By E. B. Waring and M. Wilker. Scribner's, 151 pp. 1930
- Everyday Problems of the Everyday Child*
By D. A. Thom. D. Appleton, 350 pp. 1927
- Home Guidance for Young Children*
By Grace Langdon. Day, 405 pp. 1931
- Fingersucking and Accessory Movement in Early Childhood.* By David M. Levy, M.D.
Ed. by L. G. Lowrey, Institute for Child Guidance Studies. Commonwealth Fund 290 pp. 1931
- Normal Youth and Its Everyday Problems*
By D. A. Thom. D. Appleton, 368 pp. 1932
- The Adolescent: His Conflicts and Escapes*
By S. I. Schwab and B. S. Veeder. D. Appleton, 365 pp. 1929
- Our Children: A Handbook for Parents*
Ed. by Dorothy Canfield Fisher and Sidonie M. Gruenberg. The Viking Press. 348 pp. 1932
- Section II, Chapter IX, Laws to be Broken; Chapter XI, Discipline—Old and New.

In the Magazines

Boys and Girls Know What They Like. By Helen Ferris. *Child Welfare*, October 1932.

The author, editor-in-chief of the Junior Literary Guild, stresses the importance of giving children the opportunity for exploring a wide range of reading, and thus finding their own inherent likes.

Marks and Marking. By Eugene Randolph Smith. *Child Welfare*, October 1932.

It is the writer's contention that "scientific analysis" will replace "competitive marking," the former considering "the study of human traits, the order and time of development of various powers in children, methods of scientifically testing mastery in the various fields, and methods of finding and recording information about all sides of personality."

But What Do You Do When He Says "I Won't"? By Eleanor H. Garst. *Hygeia*, October 1932.

Familiar home situations are used to illustrate the possible approach to behavior problems through disciplinary devices.

Changing Culture. *The New Era*, September 1932.

The contributors to this article, M. de Monzies, Paul Langevin, Henri Pieron and Goodwin Watson, give their separate interpretations of the theme of the Sixth World Conference of the New Education Fellowship, "Education and Changing Society."

Mental Hygiene and the Depression. By Douglas A. Thom. *Mental Hygiene*, October 1932.

Dr. Thom introduces his article by giving statistical reports of individuals admitted and cared for in mental hospitals and sanitariums during and preceding the depression. The writer then discusses the unique function of mental hygiene in the present situation, concluding with the statement that there is a reversal of relationships to other educational service. Instead of "What has mental hygiene to contribute to other industrial and educational agencies?" the problem is "What can these agencies contribute to mental hygiene?"

Present Stresses and Mental Health. By Carleton Washburne. *Childhood Education*, October 1932.

A few cases illustrate how existing conditions affecting home living aggravate the causes which point to children's maladjustment.

New Trends in Education. By William H. Kilpatrick. *The Parents' Magazine*, October 1932.*

Three trends in education are described: first, progressive education, i.e., recognizing children as personalities, and understanding that children "learn better when they are interested in what they are doing;" second, the "scientific" in education, the intelligence testing; and third, the mental hygiene approach.

What Is a Healthy Child? By William Palmer Lucas. *Delineator*, October 1932.*

Dr. Lucas warns against standardization of height, weight and diet norms as a basis for general use. "Inherited differences of body build" and appropriate diet thereto must be considered in each individual case. Healthy physical functioning, dependent on emotional stability, is another factor considered by the author in answer to his question, "What is a healthy child?"

Teaching Johnny to Play. Department of Recreation, Board of Education, Newark, New Jersey. *Recreation*, August 1932.

The educational endeavor of the system outlined in this article is to give "Johnny" an interest and desire for play for play's sake; the system of graduated awards is planned to lead up to the idea of entering an activity for its own sake.

Why I Have Come to See the Importance of Parental Education. By William Boyd. *The New Era*, September 1932.

It is the difficult situations, common to every family, rather than the exceptional ones, which make necessary the understanding of these situations by all parents. The writer tells why direct education for parenthood instead of indirect approach by means of school and church is essential.

Parent Education in California. By George C. Bush. *School Life*, September 1932.

The development of parent education from small groups of mothers to its present status as an active branch of the State Department of Adult Education is described by the Superintendent of Schools of California.

*These articles are from *Our Children: A Handbook for Parents*, reviewed on page 55.

Book Reviews

Reviewed by

EVERETT DEAN MARTIN

Our Children: A Handbook for Parents by 29 Experts in Child Study. Edited by Dorothy Canfield Fisher and Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, and sponsored by the Child Study Association of America. The Viking Press, New York. 348 pages, 1932.*

The editors of this volume may be justly proud of their achievement. They have brought together in one volume, dealing with every phase of child development and adjustment, a group of very interesting and helpful essays by a number of the outstanding authorities in America. The list of the names of the authors at once inspires confidence. Among them are Dr. Arnold Gesell, Dr. I. Newton Kugelmass, Dr. Ruth Brickner, Dr. Adolf Meyer, Dr. Bernard Glueck, Professor William H. Kilpatrick, Professor Ernest R. Groves, Professor Adelaide Teague Case and others of equal distinction.

The interesting fact about this book is its general point of view. It not only provides the parent for whom it is written with adequate information about the problems of bringing up children, but each writer sees the child's problem in the light of the larger problems of human living. The book is an aid to parents in understanding themselves, as Mrs. Gruenberg in her introductory chapter says. The book is an outgrowth of years of work and experience. Records of many thousands of questions asked by parents facing all sorts of child problems have been kept. It is out of such experience of years in giving advice to parents that the Child Study Association has learned that in most cases a specific question is in fact a point of departure, revealing a real problem. The problem, I might explain, is not only one of human relationship between parent and child, but is often a psychological problem of the parent himself. It becomes evident that the child's failure of adjustment is commonly a continuation of an early parental failure. It is often said that the problems of the younger generation are really those of the elders passed on unsolved and augmented. In these essays we learn why and how this is the case. There is a wise, sympathetic understanding in the counsels of this book. There is enlighten-

ment without condemnation. Without controversy, or pedantry, or bewildering technicalities, the book leads the reader beyond the psychic conflicts, prejudices and ignorances of past decades. The spirit of the essays is that of calm, self-understanding maturity—a maturity which has learned of science something more than its special techniques, which has never lost the purpose of organization. The book stands as an evidence of the fidelity with which the Child Study Association has adhered to its original purpose while broadening its outlook with an increasing knowledge and experience of recent years. It is an excellent example of adult education.

Thousands of parents brought up in older types of homes, living now in the midst of rapid changes both in institutions and in world events, rightly desire their children to have a guidance which today seems to be lacking. Many parents, themselves victims of present-day conflicts, feel the need of something more than mere scientific techniques. There is need for adjustment to the scientific age itself. People wish that through some wisdom their children may avoid many of the trials through which grownups have had to pass. Others, and there are many, have a feeling that their growing children are slipping away from them into an uncharted world. Finally, all parents could profit by better knowledge of the physiological and psychological care of the human organism. There is such knowledge today in abundance, and the present book is an intelligent effort to make it available to all.

Many Americans have the notion that an important book must be dull. This book is interesting from beginning to end. From the opening sentence by Mrs. Fisher to the closing paragraph by Mrs. Pilpel, the book is good reading. Throughout the volume the reader is impressed by the candor, the sanity and helpfulness of the authors. He discovers that what he is reading has quite as much to do with his own inner life as with the problems of his children. Mrs. Fisher, in her editorial introduction, writes that she is astonished at the fact that there is a public for this book. She remembers how all too recently instruction in bringing up children was a matter chiefly of old wives' tales and of tribal custom (Continued on page 61)

* Reprinted through the courtesy of the New York Herald Tribune, from *Books*, for Sunday, October 23, 1932.

Far Lands in

New Books for Children

Outline of World History for Boys and Girls. By H. C. Knapp-Fisher. E. P. Dutton & Co. 444 pp. \$3.00.

This is an engrossing story of man—his struggles and achievements through the ages—well written for the young reader. The story is told with fairness, a splendid sense of values and a definite note of inspiration. Defining civilization as cooperation for the mutual good, the author traces the growth of this ideal and holds out the hope of its fuller realization. The presentation is vital and clear, like a brilliant far-flung tapestry in whose picture all the known peoples of the earth have their place. It is a moving drama against an accurate and scholarly background.

O. L.

The Donkey of God. By Louis Untermeyer. Harcourt, Brace & Co. 300 pp. \$2.50.

For the rapid transit time-table type of traveler—for those who travel by book or by "Cook's"—this collection will mean little or nothing. But for the more fortunate, young or old, for those who are willing to travel leisurely through Italy, here is at last a true travel book—a travel book which takes one away from the beaten path into a pot-pourri of legends, known and unknown—facts mixed with fancy, history combined with mystery, tales humorous and serious, side by side with inventions of sheer beauty, gay and gay—all based on historic legend. The whole is woven together by a loose thread, making a cunning design and rhythm-like music which is Italy.

Travel this curious suggestive way, and you go far. See Naples by way of the legend of the torrone, the famous magic candy; meet Siena, remembering the legend of a thrilling horse race won by a twelve-year-old boy; ferret out the romance of Amalfi through the poet's eyes; feel the religious glow of the old memories in the author's version of the Donkey of God! For the mystery-loving there is a tale of murders solved by a mysterious painting. For the erudite there is plenty of information garnered from many authentic sources, yet imparted simply and casually.

The illustrations in black and white—finely etched bits—catch the spirit of each tale.

T. B.

The Young Revolutionist. By Pearl S. Buck. The John Day Co. 182 pp. \$1.50.

The stirring of world interest in the Far East is reflected in the new books for children about China. Just as the author's *Good Earth* interpreted Old China in all its rural isolation and stark reality, so in this book addressed to younger readers she pictures an awakening China, its youth torn between traditional loyalties and dawning ideals. The story is of Kisen, a farmer's son, who, escaping from the dread monotony of the temple to whose service he has been dedicated, catches the infection of the new nationalism and casts his lot with the revolutionary army. Rebelling against the old order, yet comprehending but little of the new, confused by the conflict of allegiances, and sickened by the blood of battles, he returns to his home at last weary and disillusioned but determined to serve his country through Christianity and science. The story has dramatic quality and interest, and presents a convincing picture of a China in the throes of momentous change.

J. F.

Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze. By Elizabeth Foreman Lewis. The John C. Winston Co. 265 pp. \$2.50.

A quite different picture of today's China is *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*, an extraordinarily fine book, completely satisfying from the point of view of story, background and characterization. The story is simple enough—life as it is met by a young boy from the country, son of a widowed mother, during the first five years that he spends under the roof of a master coppersmith. Adventures creep in, encounters with bandits, floods and irresponsible, murderous soldiers; but it is the realistic pattern of life, dramatic in its natural surge and flow, that make this book so fine. The reader winds his way through this unknown land, with its alien customs and superstitions, quite as a normal procedure, and not as though he were being inducted into a mystery by a self-conscious guide. It is pleasant too, to mingle with a culture and an ethics so stable and so fine. In terms of story, *Young Fu* begins as apprentice, becomes a journeyman coppersmith, and finally the adopted son of his master; but in terms of living, both he and the reader are enriched by a spiritual development that will be permanent for them both.

The whole is a sympathetic and understanding piece of writing, in which each character stands out like a clear etching against the vivid background of Chinese land customs. It is a mature and mellow picture of a mature and mellow civilization.

S. B.

News and Notes

THE third biennial conference of the National Council of Parent Education to be held at French Lick Springs, Indiana, on Friday and Saturday, November 11 and 12, will be devoted to considering various aspects of the problem of educating adolescents and adults in family relationships.

Dorothy Canfield Fisher, President of the American Association for Adult Education and author; Henry Neumann, Leader of the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture; W. T. B. Mitchell, Director of the Mental Hygiene Institute, Montreal; and E. C. Lindeman, Professor of Social Philosophy at the New York School of Social Work, will be among the speakers.

There will be three platform sessions: (1) Recent economic and cultural changes, changing family relationships, and the goals of education for family life and parenthood; (2) The family relationship goals of psychiatry, social work, and religious work; (3) The role of the novelist in portraying family relationships—a philosopher looks at parent education and at family life today.

In addition to these sessions, two luncheon periods will be given over to informal conferences and there will be two series of five concurrent meetings of the following functional groups: for adult study group teacher-leaders; for teachers of adolescents; for editors and writers of material for parents; for teachers of family relationships; for trainers of parent education workers.

A presentation and a discussion of significant trends in the parent education movement will precede the biennial business meeting and election of officers.

Lives in the Making was the theme of the Annual Conference of the Child Study Association of America held on October 17 and 18 in New York City. Large audiences eager to participate in the general discussion which concluded each session bespoke widespread interest in the complex problems of living, of which parents and teachers are so keenly aware today.

Nothing is more deceptive than the notion of an "average child," according to the speakers at the open-

ing session at which Jesse H. Newlon, Director of the Lincoln School, presided as chairman.

Discussing the topic—All Children and the Individual Child—from the point of view of physical development, I. Newton Kugelmass, Pediatrician to Fifth Avenue Hospital, emphatically stated that the "average child is non-existent" and that the essential quality of any human being is individuality.

Jessie Taft, Supervisor, Foster Home Department of the Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania, discussed the average in relation to the emotions. "There is no factor of personality which is so expressive of individuality as emotion, none so antagonistic to generalization. Think of your friends and the respects in which you find any two of them essentially unlike. Perhaps you will say one is less able than the other, or one is more beautiful to look upon, or one is more generous, but if you really pin yourself down to a discriminating analysis of the basis of your judgment, I think you will find that the difference lies in the quality, depth, completeness and spontaneity of the emotional life."

So also in the field of mental measurements, George D. Stoddard of the University of Iowa reiterated that "to use *average* without *variability* is as incomplete a concept as to use *length* without *breadth*. There is something of all children in the individual child, but there is something unique to be discovered in the great mass of combinations and interrelations forming each child."

At the afternoon meeting, at which Henry Neumann, Leader of the Brooklyn Ethical Culture Society, was chairman, the Role of the Home in Establishing Values was discussed by William H. Kilpatrick, Professor of Education, Goodwin Watson, Associate Professor of Education, both of Teachers College, Columbia University, and E. C. Lindeman of the New York School for Social Work. How standards and values may differ even in any one civilization was pointed out, as well as the individual's need to identify himself with the particular group to which he belongs. The parents' role in this process of becoming conscious of values is threefold—to help their children, even in their earliest behavior, see clearly what they are doing and why; to give them many oppor-

tunities to think about cause and effect; and to be sympathetic toward their problems. As a tentative guide we may think of the *good* as desirable, efficient, social, true and liberating; we must remember that even in the confusion of today it must remain variable and flexible, and that the learner's real source of knowledge will always come through experiment.

The interest aroused by the earlier sessions culminated in the dinner meeting at which a provocative discussion of Freedom and Indoctrination was introduced by Everett Dean Martin, Director of the People's Institute, as chairman. The speakers gave a broad interpretation to this question which is again being raised by parents and educators. Dorothy Canfield Fisher, President of the American Association for Adult Education and well known author, defined indoctrination as "education which is incidentally going on all the time for better or worse." To train our young people to the supremely human occupation of observing facts, generalizing from them, and making more or less workable hypotheses about managing them—this, Mrs. Fisher concluded, is the only dogma which it is safe to indoctrinate.

Elton G. Mayo, Professor of Industrial Research, Harvard University, expressed the belief that we do both all the time, and that the alternative of freedom or indoctrination has no bearing upon the relationship between adult and child, since the child's mentality differs from that of the adult in accepting only what he can understand and assimilate.

John Dewey, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Columbia University, agreed that there is no such thing as freedom from indoctrination. But he went on to say that the schools are falling far short in significant methods of scientific indoctrination. "They have become too colorless and neutral. Subjects of vital interest are not presented in the classroom and, as a result, children leave school unprepared to understand and deal with presentday issues of importance to society. Only by developing an attitude of greater courage, more intellectual self-assertion and a livelier interest in the present political, economic and social situation, will the school fulfill its important role in shaping the new social order that the world so sorely needs."

The second day of the conference was given over to a presentation of specific projects in parent education. Conferences held last summer at Frankfort and Nice, as reported by Sidonie M. Gruenberg, suggest that problems of family living are much the same on both sides of the Atlantic, although political dissensions play a more prominent part in the personal lives of European families. Brief reports of

the varied activities of Association committees followed. In the afternoon representatives of the Brearly School, Lincoln School, United Parents' Association, Detroit Public Schools, Riverside Church, Ethical Culture Schools, and the American Social Hygiene Association, gave short but intensely interesting accounts of their special parent education projects.

Articles based on the Conference will appear in the January issue of *CHILD STUDY*, of which the topic will be *The Average Child*.

The Progressive Education Association will hold its regional conference this year on November 18 and 19, at the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City. A forum on *A New Education for a New America*, with William H. Kilpatrick, chairman, will open the conference. At the dinner meeting, Bruce Bliven, Hendrik W. Van Loon and Frankwood Williams will speak on: *Can Teachers Think Without Struggle? Preparing Contented Children for the Best of All Possible Worlds; Russia Can Teach Us*.

On the second day, a series of group conferences on progressive education will be held by representatives of the Bronxville Public Schools, Child Study Association, Teachers College, City College of New York, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Sarah Lawrence College, Pennsylvania Museum of Art. It is the purpose of these discussions to give ample opportunity for a presentation of the progressive practices, techniques and activities in schools and organizations of varying types.

The theme of the evening meeting is *Alice and Her Children in a Mad Hatter's World*. James MacDonald and Harold Rugg will talk on *Peeking Into Strange Gardens and Through a Chinese Looking Glass*.

Books and the work of children in progressive schools will be on exhibition.

The thirty study groups comprising the Baltimore District of the Child Study Association reopen the first week in November. Classes at headquarters covering the periods of Infancy, The Toddler Age, School Age, and Adolescence, will be led by staff members.

Special activities of the district for the month include:

(1) An exhibition of clothing for children staged through the courtesy of the Home Economics Department of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the children's clothing departments of local stores. The selection and arrangement are supervised

by the District Committee on Children's Clothes.

(2) An exhibition of approved children's toys with an especially interesting collection of European importations. This will run from November 15 to December 15.

(3) A symposium on Activities and Interests for Children's Leisure Time to be held on Tuesday, November 15, at 8:15 P. M. in the Chapel of Catherine Hooper Hall, Goucher College. The speakers are: Mrs. Leon M. Ginsberg, chairman, and Florence E. Bamberger, Director, College for Teachers, The Johns Hopkins University; Joseph L. Wheeler, Librarian, Enoch Pratt Free Library; Otto Ortmann, Director, Peabody Institute; Roland J. McKinney, Director, Baltimore Museum of Art, and Louis R. Burnett, Director, Health and Physical Education of The Public Schools of Baltimore.

Keep Abreast of Modern Psychology

The New School for Social Research announced its fall opening on September 29 with a program of more than fifty courses in psychology, mental hygiene and education.

Joseph Jastrow has arranged a symposium on Psychologies of Today in which authoritative representatives of the several fields of psychology will provide a survey of their respective fields by way of a critical interpretation of results and purposes.

Olga Knopf of the Psychiatric Department of Cornell Clinic will lecture on Individual Psychology and its application in the adjustment of the individual to his environment. David Levy of the Institute for Child Guidance will give two courses on Behavior Problems in Children and Case Studies in Mental Hygiene. A course of eighteen lectures on Mental Hygiene for Teachers with specific reference to problems of classroom behavior and the frequent interdependency of home and school in the causation and management of such behavior, will be conducted by George K. Pratt of the National Committee on Mental Hygiene. Horace M. Kallen in a course that runs through the year will attempt to formulate a new philosophy of education. Dr. Altarez will supply from his own home-school in the Berkshires concrete data on the validity of application of the newer educational methods.

The Child and His Family

The Child Development Institute of Teachers' College, Columbia University, is offering a course on the Development and Guidance of Children from the standpoint of the child as

a member of a family unit. A second course on The Day Nursery as an Agency for Child Development and

(Continued on page 62)

A STUDY GROUP

for every . . . MOTHER
TEACHER
SOCIAL WORKER
GROUP LEADER

Handcrafts and Play for the Growing Child

First-hand experience with materials and play likely to evoke activity from children. Demonstrations in handcraft, block building, painting, carpentry for the little child, and weaving, metal work, sewing, knitting for the child up to nine. Party activities and equipment, art (sketching, sculpture, wood blocks), nature collecting, and literature.

Our Children

Normal development in relation to the child at home, at school and in the community; discussion based on OUR CHILDREN, A Handbook for Parents.

Infancy

Biological background. Significance of early behavior traits, anxiety, contentment, submissiveness. Early food habits—routine of sleep, play, elimination.

Preschool Child

Special emphasis on the underlying principles of emotional health, family relationships and the prime importance of parental attitudes.

School Age

Widening social relationships and contact with standards and personalities outside the home.

Preadolescent Period

Daily life at home, at school and on the playground. Practical questions on physical development, individual interests in reading, games and friendships.

Adolescence

Seeking to interpret the adolescent's special needs and interests in view of his physical, psychological and social needs.

Influence of Home on Child's Music Education

Presentation and demonstration of singing, rhythm, instruments, the use of the victrola, listening to radio, and books on and about music.

Psychological Factors in Adjustment

A Columbia University Extension course accepted by the New York Board of Education for alertness credit.

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Should we wait for a child to ask where babies come from before giving him this information, or should we stimulate him to ask?

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Does the nursery school offer anything that a well-equipped home could not be made to offer?

What should be done with a child who withdraws from competitions of all kinds and only wants to read?

How can parents maintain standards and ideals without seeming "old-fashioned" to their children?

At what age should a child have a stipulated amount of money with which to exercise his own control?

OUR CHILDREN

A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS

Edited by DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER and SIDONIE MATSNER GRUENBERG. Sponsored by The Child Study Association of America. Published by The Viking Press.

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Our Children

Reviewed by

EVERETT DEAN MARTIN

(Continued from page 55) and ignorance. The mother who read books for the sake of better knowledge of children was considered ridiculous. Now all that is changed, and with the change has come the promise of a better, healthier, happier human race.

The thing about the book which perhaps most delighted the reviewer is its amazing sanity in dealing with the complex problems of human relations. With almost no exception, every writer takes such a view of his own specialty that he sees it from the standpoint of the complete developing human being. It is made clear that one can understand the specific facts of human development only as these facts are viewed in relation to the organism as a whole.

My only criticism would be of the concluding section, parts of which I think place too much emphasis on social reconstruction, and too little on the necessity of meeting such transition with a trained sense of the values of civilized people in all ages. Some of these pages might, I believe, have been omitted, since many of the psychological problems of social adjustment have already been dealt with in the earlier chapters, and the treatment of social change here leaves much to be desired from the standpoint of a philosophy of education. The chapter by Professor Case is excellent. I do not see how the subject of religious education, frequently a perplexing matter today, could have been better written. The concluding chapter, by Mrs. Pilpel, is a right epilogue and leaves the book where a discussion of developing life should leave it.

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News and Notes

(Continued from page 59)

Social Welfare will start on February 11. Emphasis will be given to the provisions which should be offered in the home and in the nursery for an integrated program of child care and guidance.

The Institute also conducts two groups for pre-school children—a Nursery School and a Guidance Nursery as centers for demonstration, experimentation and training of students. The Nursery School is a demonstration of a typical all-day nursery school, while the Guidance Nursery has been organized as an experiment. Cooperation in carrying out the program is required, including frequent conferences between parents, parent education consultant, nutritionist and nursery school teacher.

A selection of the best achievements of American education from pre-school to university is being brought together for the great exhibition that is being built up by the Institute für Volkerpädagogik in Mainz. The material will include good examples of American education in health, citizenship, leisure, vocational training, schools and curricular activities, and is being gathered under the auspices of the International Institute, Teachers College, Columbia University.

The educational efforts of many different nations will be presented as permanent exhibits. The German Pedagogic Exhibit gives a lively survey of German schooling showing instructive models and drawings of new school buildings, new school furniture, modern school apparatus, toys, gramophone records and films. As a basis for the study of comparative education, the permanent international exhibit, which now contains sections of other European countries, will be enlarged by a really representative section. To American teachers, the new Institute gives an opportunity for a permanent display of progressive educational material to be shown to teachers in Europe.

Radio
 Program

During the Woman's Radio Review, over WEAF from 3:30 to 4:00, on November 15, Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg will talk on European Educational Conferences, held during the past summer. At the same hour on November 21, Mrs. Hugh Grant Straus will talk on Children and the Books of Today.

A
MONTHLY
REMINDER:
NOVEMBER



CHILD STUDY
ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA

221 West 57 Street
New York, N. Y.

THURSDAY
THE 3rd
11 A.M.

FRIDAY
THE 4th
10:30 A.M.

WEDNESDAY
THE 9th
3 P.M.

TUESDAY
THE 22nd
2:30 P.M.

TUESDAY
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Truth and Falsehood

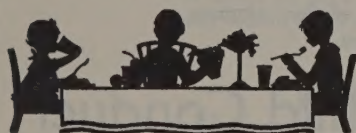
A symposium conducted by staff members of the Child Study Association. Cécile Pilpel, chairman.

How Children Acquire Social Attitudes

A conference. Stephen P. Duggan, chairman, and Alain Locke, Bruno Lasker, Rev. Wm. Lloyd Imca, Arthur L. Swift, Jr., Mrs. Harry M. Bremer, Grace Gosselin, Sidonie M. Gruenberg, speakers.

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*From a review by Franklin G. Ebaugh, M.D., in the
American Journal of Psychiatry.*

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The Editors' Page



PLAY is an attitude. It is not so much what one does, as how he feels about what he does that makes the difference between play and drudgery. It is a mistake to let a child acquire a sharp distinction between play and work, to believe that play is pleasurable and useless while work is necessary and distasteful. Let him learn that all activity is fun, that life itself is a game, that a vocation can, and should, be just as pleasurable as an avocation, and you have started him on the pathway to a wholesome adult life. The greater the number of diverse activities the child is encouraged to enjoy, the greater his chances of keeping the zestful attitude of play toward all of life.

THE great danger lies in providing the child with toys while depriving him of the privilege of learning to play—to make things happen for himself. A child can be surrounded with toys and still be fidgety and dissatisfied because each toy represents coercion to him. A boy will have more fun playing with a pile of rocks in the back alley than with some mechanical toy that only his father can operate, or that will lead to scolding should he break it.

WHAT does a child enjoy? He enjoys seeing things happen as a result of his activity. The joy a baby gets from throwing a spoon repeatedly to the floor may be the noise that he has made. When a grown person gets a thrill from having accomplished something, he is experiencing the same type of joy that the baby with the spoon enjoys. He is, in the best sense, playing. Play is not a side issue of life reserved for children. Life itself is a game, beginning with the simple acts of childhood and increasing in complexity, but suffused from beginning to end with the attitude of play—the joy of doing things.

John J. B. Morgan

CHILD STUDY

A JOURNAL OF PARENT EDUCATION
VOL X DECEMBER 1932 No. 3

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CHILD STUDY entered as second class matter March 8, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright 1932 by Child Study Association of America, Inc., 221 West 57 St., New York, N. Y. Eight months, October through May. Fifteen cents per copy; one dollar a year. Add twenty-five cents for all foreign subscriptions.